HOLDEN'S STORY OF LINCOLN.

How the People of Lancashire Were Unionists.

It was like this: I was born in Burnley, Lancashire, England, during the Civil War in America. My native town and all the large towns around it were dependent on American cotton for their existence. Lancashire was the cotton-weaving county. When the war began, the cotton stopped coming from the States, and what you know as the Civil War was known to my people as "The Cotton Famine." And what a famine that was no one will ever know except those who took part in it. Sitting by the fireplace on winter evenings, I have heard the story so often that, as I now recall it, it seems almost too horrible to relate. My father says that when I was bo n there was but half a loaf in the house, and many of his neighbors had gone south to beg their bread from door to door. Some emigrated to the Northwestern States, and found the pinch was not felt as much as in their native town. First the news came that the war could not last, and that Lincoln would settle it quickly. The mills and weaving-sheds were put on short time, three days a week, and so they held for four months. Then came two days; then they closed altogether. Many firms crippled themselves to keep their employees at work. Hundreds of half-famished men and women gathered around the one or two daily newspapers hoping against hope and expecting every morning that the Federals had taken Richmond, but it was long delayed. Mills closed, stores closed, mines closed. Men who were in comfortable circumstances before that war had to make over their business houses to their creditors.

The wealthier classes, the cotton-broker and large manufacturer, favored the South, because they could not understand how the North, supposing it was victorious, was going to give them any cotton. It is no doubt true that Union soldiers found English-made arms on the battlefield after routing men of the South, but I tell you the poor starved cotton operatives in Lancashire had nothing to do with it. Men I have worked with told me about the terrible change that came to them in those dark days. Families in affluence were brought to poverty. I have often wondered how much that half-loaf—and it was the last one in the street of forty homes—had to do with my mother's death soon after I was born. I wonder how many poor wretches there were in the crowd that agreed one night, after what they called a starvation meeting, to go and end their lives in the canal. Father said they had a wholesale burial next day, and starvation meetings were prohibited after that. One man had a business worth £100,000, but when I left England he and his family were working for thirty shillings a week in the great firm he owned before those times. The question in every home, on every street corner, on every pallid lip, from the old man to the child that could not understand it all, was, "Has Lee surrendered yet?"

Do you want to know which side they were on? Let me tell you. It was in Glosup, near Manchester, that a cotton salesman, or broker, got up and made a speech in one of the relief meetings. He hoped "that the South would smash Lincoln and the North into cocked hats." He never finished that speech. I have met him on the cotton exchange many a time, and he bears a mark on his face that even the children call "the Lincoln mark."

It was of no use for an aristocrat to attempt to argue with these hungry, desperate men. They had been too long already under the power of the lord and landlord, which is a synonym for oppression in that country. They had worked too long at poorhouse wages not to feel a thrill of pride and fellowship that they were counted worthy to suffer with you for liberty's sake. Hundreds of children died. Disease as well as starvation set in before it was over. One grist-mill bears the marks today of having been broken into, though protected day and night by forty policemen, and it was said that the three hundred sacks of flour were taken from that mill, and distributed, baked, and eaten in two days. This was but one town, and Lancashire is all town. There were 2,300,000 people in that county dependent on the results of that long-drawn-out war.

Abraham Lincoln's proclamation of liberty to the slaves is the best-known foreign document to the cotton operatives of Lancashire. Many a boy and girl can repeat it offhand. I remember the Government inspector of schools addressing our school of twelve hundred scholars once, and he asked the question: "Whom do you regard as the greatest man outside of England?" and a hundred voices shouted in chorus, "Abraham Lincoln!" as if "Old Abe" were still living. The second question was: "Who do you think is the greatest man that this country of ours has produced?" Here a medley arose amid which John Bright, W. E. Gladstone, and Tom Brown were prominent. One little fellow said: "My dad says Lincoln is bigger'n 'm all." Need I tell you that every fiber of American cotton (and I know by a long and sad experience it is the best cotton in the world) bears to the Lancastrian the name and stamp of your great liberator? The man to whom Lee surrendered said that Manchester gave him the greatest welcome next to Washington.

Among the many—and there were many—who came to our relief in those sad, dark days of starvation and death were the good old Queen and Tom Brown—Thomas Hughes, Judge of the Supreme Court of Queen's London. But all the boys of the English language know him as the man who wrote "Tom Brown's School Days." Tom was a lawyer in London then, and he dropped everything and "stumped" the country, and begged, borrowed, and—I was going to say—stole for the Lancashire operatives. He shook the aristocracy out of their lethargy, and never let them rest until they came to the help of the sufferers. A settlement of Lancashire people in Wisconsin sent a carload of flour across the ocean, consigned "Thomas Hughes, Liverpool." But it got to Manchester, and men broke away the car door before the train stopped, and women carried the flour away with them in their aprons, or in any shape. Times were hard then!

Judge Hughes, in return for what Chicago did to help him in his relief work at that time, when the city burned some years afterwards, furnished three hundred autograph volumes for the free library of the new Chicago. They are there still.

In one corner of the great Cotton Exchange in Manchester is a little stand, and under a glass globe is a miniature bale of raw cotton, and behind it the legend in gilt lettering: "Part of the first bale of free cotton. Shipped from West Virginia, U. S., to Liverpool, 1865. Free cotton is King. But what did it cost?"

The story of that bale of cotton is soon told. People from all the towns "footed it" to Liverpool and got a "lurry" (flat wagon), and trimmed it with flowers and bunting, and placed the bale of cotton in the center of the wagon, and the flag that you know so well newly vindicated in liberty, and the flag under which I was born, and which, in spite of all its mistakes and blunders of the 1770s. is a glorious flag, and between them the picture that you love, that my father loved, that you suffered for, that my folks suffered for, the plain picture that appeals to plain people in all the world—ABRAHAM LINCOLN. The rest of the space was filled with children, and the wagon was dragged from the docks through Exchange Street and Lime Street to St. George's Square, where it served as an altar for the Bishop of Manchester, who preached a sermon to twenty thousand people on the lessons of Civil Liberty. That sermon and the songs of the children still echo in their hearts.

I have asked those men again and again, "Would you do it again? Would you suffer again for liberty's sake?" And I asked myself, "Would I be willing to sacrifice mother and father at an early age through suffering resultant on that starvation period for this cause?" The answer is with them, as it is with you and me, a great big "Yes."

My friend Jacob Riis has been telling the American reader about the "Making of an American." It seems to me like this, to change an old aphorism: "Some are born Americans, some achieve Americanism, and some have Americanism thrust upon them." Mr. Riis was of the second class, and I think I belong to the third.

HOTEL CHAPLAINS.

Plan to look after Spiritual Interests of Transients.

A meeting has just been held at the Manhattan Hotel, New York City, of considerable interest to clergymen and hotel-keepers alike. The meeting was called at the suggestion of the Rev. H. M. Warren, D. D., of the Central Park Baptist Church. Two years ago Dr. Warren sent to the various hotels of the metropolis a card stating that having been frequently called upon to render pastoral assistance to their guests, he believed hotel guests in general would be glad if they knew where some clergyman could be found who, upon request for services, would cheerfully respond. With the advice and hearty co-operation of his own church, Dr. Warren therefore took this way of making known his willingness gratuitously to give a part of his time in ministering to the spiritual needs of any who might desire either the sympathy or the advice of a Christian minister. Dr. Warren was now so frequently called to visit hotel guests that he deemed a concerted movement of clergymen necessary in order to cope with the opportunity and demand; hence the Manhattan Hotel meeting, at which the Rev. R. S. MacArthur, D. D., was made Chairman, Mr. Alexander M. Hadden, Secretary, and the Hon. Thomas L. James Treasurer. The meeting was sympathetic throughout, and resulted in the formation of a Hotel Chaplaincy Committee. It will provide a pastor always ready to officiate at hotel funerals, and to be called upon whenever any trouble comes to any guest; in other words, to serve the transient population of the city as it has not yet been served. This field of usefulness has been but little covered and in its possibilities is larger than many suppose.